

IN THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application. An identifier indicating the status of each claim is provided.

Listing of Claims

1. (Currently Amended) An information providing apparatus for providing a desired information screen by making selection from icons respectively assigned to information screens, comprising:

means for displaying a menu of recommended channels, said recommended channels selected based on high past frequencies of selection;

means for displaying a menu of categories, said categories containing programs classified into said categories based on program information;

means for displaying a menu of media, said menu of media representing contents of a plurality of recording/reproducing media;

operation information input means inputted with operation information based on selection operation,

wherein the operation information entails operation keys, which are input sequentially, and are simultaneously operated; and

switching means for switching a menu screen on which the icons are arranged, to an information screen of a selected one of the icons, with a predetermined transit screen inserted therebetween, in response to the operation information,

wherein the switching means gradually enlarges the selected icon on the transit screen, to zoom in on the icon, and gradually fades display of the selected icon on the transit screen to switch this display to display of the information screen, and

wherein the information screen, the transit screen, and the menu screen display a title indicating a presently focused icon in an upper portion of each screen.

2. (Canceled)

3. (Currently Amended) An information providing apparatus for providing a desired information screen by making selection from icons respectively assigned to information screens, wherein

the desired information screen comprises means for displaying a menu of recommended channels selected based on high past frequencies of selection, means for displaying a menu of categories containing programs classified into said categories based on program information, and means for displaying a menu of media representing contents of a plurality of recording/reproducing media,

the icons are group icons respectively assigned to groups each grouping a plurality of information screens,

the information providing apparatus comprises operation information input means inputted with operation information based on selection operation, and switching means for switching a menu screen in an upper layer on which the group icons are arranged, to a first menu screen in a layer lower than a selected group icon, with a predetermined first transit screen inserted therebetween,

wherein the operation information entails operation keys, which ~~are input sequentially, and~~ are simultaneously operated,

the switching means gradually enlarges the selected group icon on the first transit screen, to zoom in onto the group icon, and gradually fades display of the selected icon onto which the display is zooming in, on the transit screen, to switch the display to display of the first menu screen in the lower layer, and

the information screen, the transit screen, and the menu screen display a title indicating a presently focused icon in an upper portion of each screen.

4. (Canceled)

5. (Currently Amended) An apparatus according to claim 3, ~~characterized in that wherein~~ the group icon in the lower layer has a second menu screen in a much-lower layer, on which group icons are further arranged, and

the switching means switches the first menu screen in the lower layer on which the group icons are arranged, to the second menu screen in the lower layer of the selected group icon, with a predetermined second transit screen inserted therebetween, in response to the operation information, gradually enlarges the selected group icon on the transit screen to zoom in on the group icon, and gradually fades display of the group icon onto which the display is zooming in, on the second transit screen, to switch the display to display of the second menu screen in the lower layer.

6. (Canceled)

7. (Currently Amended) An information providing apparatus for providing a desired information screen by making selection from icons respectively assigned to information screens, comprising:

means for displaying a menu of recommended channels, said recommended channels selected based on high past frequencies of selection;

means for displaying a menu of categories, said categories containing programs classified into said categories based on program information;

means for displaying a menu of media, said menu of media representing contents of a plurality of recording/reproducing media;

operation information input means inputted with operation information based on selection operation,

wherein the operation information entails operation keys, which are ~~input sequentially, and~~ are simultaneously operated; and

switching means for switching the information screen to a menu screen on which the icons are arranged, with a predetermined transit screen inserted therebetween, in response to the operation information,

wherein the switching means gradually ~~minifies~~minimizes enlarged display of an icon corresponding to the information screen, to zoom out onto the menu screen from display which has zoomed in on the icon, and gradually fades display of the information screen to switch the display of the information screen to display of a corresponding icon, and

wherein the information screen, the transit screen, and the menu screen display a title indicating a presently focused icon in an upper portion of each screen.

8. (Canceled)

9. (Currently Amended) An information providing apparatus for providing a desired information screen by making selection from icons respectively assigned to information screens, wherein

the desired information screen comprises means for displaying a menu of recommended channels selected based on high past frequencies of selection, means for displaying a menu of categories containing programs classified into said categories based on program information, and means for displaying a menu of media representing contents of a plurality of recording/reproducing media,

the icons are group icons respectively assigned to groups each grouping a plurality of information screens,

the information providing apparatus comprises operation information input means inputted with operation information based on selection operation, and switching means for switching a menu screen in a lower layer on which the group icons are arranged, to a first menu screen in a layer upper than the selected group icon, with a predetermined first transit screen inserted therebetween,

the operation information entails operation keys, which ~~are input sequentially,~~
~~and are simultaneously operated,~~

the switching means gradually ~~minifies~~minimizes a group icon corresponding to a menu in the lower layer, to zoom out from the group icon, and gradually fades display of

the menu screen in the lower layer, to switch the display of the menu screen in the lower layer to display of the group icon corresponding to the menu screen in the lower layer, and

the information screen, the transit screen, and the menu screen display a title indicating a presently focused icon in an upper portion of each screen.

10. (Canceled)

11. (Currently Amended) An apparatus according to claim 9, ~~characterized in that wherein~~ the group icon in the upper layer has a second menu screen ~~in a much an~~ upper layer, on which group icons are further arranged, and

the switching means switches the first menu screen in the upper layer, on which the group icons are arranged, to the second menu screen in the upper layer of a selected group icon, with a predetermined second transit screen inserted therebetween, in response to the operation information, gradually ~~minifies~~ minimizes the selected group icon on the transit screen to zoom out from the group icon, and gradually fades display of the first menu screen to switch the first menu screen to a corresponding second menu screen.

12-21. (Canceled)

22. (Currently Amended) An information providing method for providing a desired information screen by making selection from icons assigned to information screens, comprising:

means for displaying a menu of recommended channels, said recommended channels selected based on high past frequencies of selection;

means for displaying a menu of categories, said categories containing programs classified into said categories based on program information;

means for displaying a menu of media, said menu of media representing contents of a plurality of recording/reproducing media;

an operation information input step of being inputted with operation information based on selection operation,

wherein the operation information entails operation keys, which are input sequentially, and are simultaneously operated; and

a switching step of switching a menu screen on which the icons are arranged, to an information screen of an icon selected from the icons, with a predetermined transit screen inserted therebetween, in response to the operation information,

wherein in the switching step, the selected icon is gradually enlarged on the transit screen, to zoom in on the icon, and display of the selected icon on the transit screen is gradually faded to switch this display to display of the information screen, and

wherein the information screen, the transit screen, and the menu screen display a title indicating a presently focused icon in an upper portion of each screen.

23. (Canceled)

24. (Currently Amended) An information providing method for providing a desired information screen by making selection from icons assigned to information screens, wherein

the desired information screen comprises means for displaying a menu of recommended channels selected based on high past frequencies of selection, means for displaying a menu of categories containing programs classified into said categories based on program information, and means for displaying a menu of media representing contents of a plurality of recording/reproducing media,

the icons are group icons respectively assigned to groups each grouping a plurality of information screens,

the information providing method comprises an operation information input step of being inputted with operation information based on selection operation, and a switching step of switching a menu screen in an upper layer on which the group icons are arranged, to a first menu screen in a lower layer of a selected group icon, with a predetermined first transit screen inserted therebetween,

the operation information entails operation keys, which ~~are input sequentially,~~
~~and~~ are simultaneously operated,

in the switching step, the selected group icon is gradually enlarged on the first transit screen, to zoom in onto the group icon, and display of the selected icon onto which the display is zooming in is gradually faded on the transit screen, to switch the display to display of the first menu screen in the lower layer, and

the information screen, the transit screen, and the menu screen display a title indicating a presently focused icon in an upper portion of each screen.

25. (Canceled)

26. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 24, ~~characterized in~~
~~that wherein~~

the group icon in the lower layer has a second menu screen in a ~~much~~-lower
layer, on which icons are further arranged, and

in the switching step, the first menu screen in the lower layer on which the
group icons are arranged, is switched to the second menu screen in the lower layer of the
selected group icon, with a predetermined second transit screen inserted therebetween, in
response to the operation information, and the selected group icon on the transit screen is
gradually enlarged to zoom in on the group icon, and display of the group icon onto which the
display is zooming in is gradually faded on the second transit screen, to switch the display to
display of the second menu screen in the lower layer.

27. (Canceled)

28. (Currently Amended) An information providing method for providing a
desired information screen by making selection from icons assigned to information screens,
comprising:

a display step of displaying a menu of recommended channels, a menu of
categories, and a menu of media;

an operation information input step of being inputted with operation

information based on selection operation,

wherein the operation information entails operation keys, which ~~are~~
~~input sequentially, and~~ are simultaneously operated; and

a switching step of switching the information screen to a menu screen on
which the icons are arranged, with a predetermined transit screen inserted therebetween, in
response to the operation information, wherein in the switching step, enlarged display of the
icon corresponding to the information screen is gradually ~~minified~~ minimized, to zoom out
onto the menu screen from display which has zoomed in on the icon, and display of the
information screen is gradually faded to switch the display of the information screen to
display of the corresponding icon,

wherein the information screen, the transit screen, and the menu screen
display a title indicating a presently focused icon in an upper portion of each screen, and

wherein said recommended channels are selected based on high past
frequencies of selection, said categories contain programs classified into said categories based
on program information, and said menu of media represents contents of a plurality of
recording/reproducing media.

29. (Canceled)

30. (Currently Amended) An information providing method for providing a
desired information screen by making selection from icons respectively assigned to
information screens, wherein

the desired information screen comprises means for displaying a menu of recommended channels selected based on high past frequencies of selection, means for displaying a menu of categories containing programs classified into said categories based on program information, and means for displaying a menu of media representing contents of a plurality of recording/reproducing media,

the icons are group icons respectively assigned to groups each grouping a plurality of information screens,

the information providing method comprises an operation information input step of being inputted with operation information based on selection operation, and a switching step of switching a menu screen in a lower layer on which the group icons are arranged, to a first menu screen in a layer upper than a selected group icon, with a predetermined first transit screen inserted therebetween,

the operation information entails operation keys, which ~~are input sequentially,~~
~~and~~ are simultaneously operated,

in the switching step, the group icon corresponding to a menu in the lower layer is gradually ~~minified~~ minimized, to zoom out from the group icon, and display of the menu screen in the lower layer is gradually faded, to switch the display of the menu screen in the lower layer to display of the group icon corresponding to the menu screen in the lower layer, and

the information screen, the transit screen, and the menu screen display a title indicating a presently focused icon in an upper portion of each screen.

31. (Canceled)

32. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 30, ~~characterized~~
~~in that~~wherein the group icon in the upper layer has a second menu screen in ~~a~~an upper
layer, on which group icons are further arranged, and

in the switching step, the first menu screen in the upper layer, on which the
group icons are arranged, is gradually switched to the second menu screen in the upper layer
of a selected group icon, with a predetermined second transit screen inserted therebetween, in
response to the operation information, the selected group icon is gradually ~~minified~~
minimized on the transit screen, to zoom out from the group icon, and display of the first
menu screen is gradually faded to switch display from the first menu screen to a
corresponding second menu screen.

33-42. (Canceled)